

**CALIFORNIA FINANCIAL  
LITERACY MONTH**

**2004**



**Tip of the Day**

**APRIL**

**“BUILDING STRONG FINANCIAL FUTURES”**

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>
				1 Do not give personal information over the phone, Intranet or through the mail unless you initiate the contact.	2 Check your credit card statement each month for unauthorized charges; report any discrepancies right away.	3 Thoroughly research any investment opportunities (Check references & read all materials).
4 Carry only the cards (credit & ID) that you need to have with you; file others in a safe place at home.	5 Pay off credit cards at the end of each month to avoid accruing interest and creating debt.	6 Continue educating yourself on money matters; learn how to budget.	7 Before signing a document, ask the financial institution to explain any fees, terms or conditions you do not understand.	8 Make sure that a loan/credit fits your budget. Don't sign if you are not comfortable with the fees, rates, monthly payments, etc.	9 Verify that your deposits/funds are insured; look for the official FDIC, NCUA or ASI logo.	10 Destroy all your checks after you close a checking account.
11 Install a lockable mailbox at your residence to reduce mail theft.	12 Protect your identity! Do not carry your social security card with you.	13 Always protect your ATM card and keep it in a safe place, just like you would cash, credit cards and checks.	14 Shred all documents containing credit or identification information prior to disposal.	15 Keep track of your receipts, pay stubs, tax return information & all things money related.	16 Pay attention to your billing cycles. Follow up with creditors if your bills don't arrive on time.	17 Compare interest rates.
18 Sign cards when they arrive, so no one can forge your signature on the cards & use them.	19 Take advantage of compound interest and start investing early.	20 Be skeptical about financial advice and research the facts to make smart choices that are right for you.	21 Never attach or write your pin or social security number to your ATM debit or credit card.	22 Keep an eye on your accounts, (savings, checking and credit card accounts)	23 When using an ATM be aware of your surroundings, particularly at night.	24 Do not visually display or count your money at the ATM, wait until you get home.
25 Deposit money from each paycheck into a special savings account to prepare for unexpected events.	26 Frequently check your credit report for any discrepancies or unauthorized activities.	27 When you pay bills, don't put them in your mailbox, drop them in a US Postal Service mailbox or take them to the Post Office.	28 When choosing a password, avoid using easily available information, i.e., birth dates, phone numbers & consecutive numbers.	29 Fill out charge slips completely, do not sign if blank & draw a line through blank spaces.	30 Be aware of the difference between saving and investing.	

**OTHER STATE DEPARTMENTS**

Department of Corporations (DOC) 800-347-6995  
Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) 800-952-5210  
Department of Real Estate (DRE) 213-620-2072

**OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTION REGULATORS**

Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) 800-613-6743  
National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) 800-755-5999  
Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC) 800-934-3342  
American Share Insurance (ASI) 800-521-6342

**CREDIT BUREAUS**

Trans Union Credit Services 800-888-4213  
Experian Credit Services 888-397-3742  
Equifax Credit Services 800-685-1111

**Department of Financial Institutions**  
**CFLM 2004 Web site**  
**[www.dfi.ca.gov/CFLM2004](http://www.dfi.ca.gov/CFLM2004)**